

Week Ending Friday, September 24, 1993

Nomination for Ambassador to Brunei

September 17, 1993

The President today announced his intention to nominate career Foreign Service officer Theresa Anne Tull as Ambassador to Brunei.

"Theresa Anne Tull has spent her entire life serving our country in the Foreign Service," the President said. "I am certain she will use that experience to represent America well overseas and am proud that she has accepted this challenge."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

September 18, 1993

Good morning. This week we've seen inspiring examples of people reaching across their differences, having the courage to change, to achieve what is best for everyone.

On Monday, I had the great honor of hosting Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and PLO Chairman Arafat for the signing of the historic peace agreement between two peoples who have been engaged in a century of bitter conflict. Their unforgettable handshake holds the hope of a normal and more secure life for Israelis and Palestinians. And with American leadership we can build on this historic agreement to promote peace throughout the region and beyond.

On Tuesday, I signed agreements strengthening the North American Free Trade Agreement protecting labor and environmental standards in Mexico, Canada, and the United States. I was joined by former Presidents from both parties: President Bush, President Carter, and President Ford. We stood together because NAFTA will cre-

ate jobs here in the United States, 200,000 jobs by 1995.

This week, Americans began a new chapter in our national discussion about one of our greatest challenges, how to preserve what's right and fix what's wrong with our health care system. In the Rose Garden on Thursday, the First Lady and I and Vice President and Tipper Gore met with a few of the people from all across America who had written to us about their experiences with health care and their growing insecurity.

Nine months ago, when I asked Americans to send us their thoughts about health care, I had no idea we would receive over 700,000 letters. If you read some of those letters, as I have, the picture becomes clear: Even the millions of Americans who enjoy good health care coverage today are concerned that it won't be there for them next month or next year. Their stories make me even more determined than ever to provide health security to every American.

On Thursday morning, I spoke with Mabel Piley from Iola, Kansas. She and her husband own a small garden shop. After they each had minor surgery, their insurance premiums more than tripled in 4 years, until they hit \$900 a month. They finally had to drop the coverage. Since then they found new coverage but with a \$2,500 annual deductible. She told me, "My concern now is for my children and grandchildren. I sincerely hope our Government can do something about this runaway nightmare of a problem."

And I heard a heartbreaking story from Margie Silverman of Miami, about her 28-year-old daughter who lives in California. Last year, her daughter had a serious operation. And now, at a time when her daughter needs to be with her family, she can't move back home. That's because she's insured through a company that doesn't operate in

Florida. And no other company will cover her because of her preexisting condition.

These problems and many others like them affect us as Americans, not as Democrats or Republicans, and frankly, not as people who consume health care and those who provide it. I talked to doctors and nurses today who are heartsick at the burden of unnecessary paperwork. At the Children's Hospital here in Washington, the doctors told me that \$2 million a year is spent on paperwork that has nothing to do with caring for patients, that the average doctor has to give up the chance to see 500 more patients a year just to fill out forms.

I know we can work together, across the lines of partisanship, to solve these problems and find an American answer to this American challenge.

On Wednesday night, when I speak before a joint session of Congress, I will ask the Congress to provide every American with comprehensive health care benefits that cannot be taken away. I'll ask Congress to work with me to reduce costs, increase choices, improve quality, cut paperwork, and keep our health care the finest in the world. And I'll ask members of both parties to work together for this important purpose.

We have to work together because there is so much that is good about American medicine that we must preserve. We have the best doctors and nurses, the finest hospitals, the most advanced research, the most sophisticated technology in the world. We cherish this as Americans, and we'll never give them up, nor will we give up our right to choose our doctors, our hospitals, and our medical treatments. That is especially true for older Americans, who've worked their whole lives and deserve this security. I want to say to those older Americans listening today: Our plan offers you more peace of mind.

First—and this is something I feel strongly about—we will maintain the Medicare program. If you're happy with Medicare, you can stay in it. And we're going to increase your choices and give you the chance to join a less expensive plan, but it'll be your choice. We're also going to maintain your right to choose your own doctor, and you'll continue to get the benefits you get now.

Second, we must do something about the human tragedy of older Americans who are forced to choose, literally choose every week between medicine and food or housing. Prescription drugs, currently the largest out-of-pocket expense for older Americans, will be covered under this proposal.

Third, our initiative will expand services for older Americans with serious illnesses or disabilities. Today, about 75 percent of elderly Americans with serious illness receive care from their families. But often these families can't afford the services they really need. Now, for the first time, all older Americans with serious impairments will be eligible for care in their homes or in community-based settings that they choose. This will help them be near their families while receiving the care they need.

Finally, this initiative will offer tax incentives that will make private insurance more affordable for older Americans seeking coverage for long-term care.

Sixty years ago, in the midst of the Great Depression, America provided Social Security for all Americans so that a lifetime of work would be rewarded by a dignified retirement. Now it's time to provide health security for all Americans so that people who work hard and take responsibility for their own lives can enjoy the peace of mind they deserve. To reach this goal, I want to work with everyone, doctors and patients, business and labor, Republicans and Democrats. At a time when the world is filled with new hope and possibility, let's work together for a great goal worthy of our great Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:04 p.m. on September 17 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 18.

Remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Dinner

September 18, 1993

Thank you very much. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun, I'll never forget the first time I saw you campaigning in Chicago in